

The Semi-Weekly Tribune.

IRA L. BARE, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

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WOMAN'S EDITION.

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To Friends and Subscribers.

We hope you will like our paper. Though edited entirely by women it is done in the interests of the men. We are the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Y. M. C. A. We are trying to raise money to renew the subscriptions for periodicals used in the Y. M. C. A. rooms. We want to help the men young and old. They have certainly helped us in this enterprise. First the editor of THE TRIBUNE has turned over to our use his press, paper, time and patience. The business men of North Platte have given us their advertisements without which our plan would have proven a failure.

Our first impulse was to settle in this issue all questions of the day, both local and national—such as irrigation, the financial question and woman suffrage. On second thought we concluded to leave room for discussion of these subjects for the men, in the future.

We have given you correspondence from friends from all parts of the country. Articles on education, societies, both public and private, and other articles "too numerous to mention."

With this issue we retire to our usual avocations, leaving the men in peaceful possession, for which, the editor we are sure will be thankful.

Now that the question of the rights of women to the ballot box and all its privileges is no longer a matter of animal wariness of a few ranting orators, but one of the most notable feature of their politics is, that no political party dare present a candidate whose life is known to be unclean.

Does any thoughtful man really believe that he has the natural right to deprive another of the means of self-protection, and that he has the wisdom to govern individuals and classes better than they can govern themselves? England's experiment with Ireland, Russia's with Poland, the Southern states with Africans, the Northern states with women, all prove the impossibility of one class legislating with fairness for another.

The bitter discontent and continued protests of all these subject classes are so many emphatic denials of the rights of one man to govern another without his consent. Forbidden by law to settle one's quarrels with the rude weapons of savage life; and denied their substitute in civilization. The position of the citizen is indeed hopeless, with his right of person and property wholly at the mercy of others.

Such is the real position of all citizens who are denied the right of suffrage. They may have favors granted them, they may enjoy many privileges, but they cannot be said to have any sacred rights.

But we are told that disfranchisement does not effect the position of woman because they are bound to the governing classes by all the ties of family, friendship and love, by the affection, loyalty and chivalry that every man owes his mother, sister, wife and daughter.

The rights of person and property must be as safe in his hands as in her own.

Does woman need protection from the men of her own family? Let the calendars of our courts and the columns of our daily papers answer the question.

The disfranchisement of woman is a terrible impeachment of the loyalty and chivalry of every man in this nation. And even if all men were wise, generous and honorable, possessed of all the cardinal virtues, it would still be better for women to govern themselves, to exercise their own capacities and powers in assuming the responsibilities of citizenship.

Whenever and wherever the right of suffrage has not proved beneficial it has not been because

the citizen had too many rights, but because he did not know how to use them for his own advantage.

Individual freedom and self government, citizenship and suffrage are synonymous. In demanding their own disfranchisement have women been pursuing a shadow the last half century? In seeking political power do they abdicate that social throne where their influence is said to be unbounded? No, No! the right of suffrage is not a mere shadow, but a substantial entity, that the citizen can wield for his own protection and his country's welfare, an individual opinion counted on all questions of public interest is better than indirect influence be it ever so far reaching.

When a majority of American woman want the ballot they will get it. You never met a man who did not assent to this conviction, and who did not second the following assertion, that the worst opponents to female suffrage are women themselves. Women must take an interest in politics and throw all their influence on the side of honest legislation. The republic cries aloud for patriotic mothers. Where are our Cornelias. It is not a woman's diamonds that help the state. It is the jewels of true manhood and womanhood in her children, it is her own dignity and integrity of thought and deed.

What we need is a campaign of education. Women must be interested in politics beginning with the government of their towns and counties. When their eyes are opened in this direction, when they see where the ship of state is drifting, then they will demand the ballot to save their children from the worst despotism ever conceived—the despotism of ignorance, anarchy and cranks.

The right of suffrage is the only untried remedy for the evils into which a government organized and administered solely by men has plunged the nation. Contrast the revelations of the Lexow committee with the results given us by the women of Lexington. It is not enough to say, in explanation of the splendid spectacle of the defeat of Breckenridge that women did it without the vote. The more significant fact is that if women had had the vote, the contest could never have occurred. If women had the ballot, no self-confessed destroyer of woman's honor would ever be named for public office. In Wyoming where women have voted for twenty years, it is universal that the most notable feature of their politics is, that no political party dare present a candidate whose life is known to be unclean.

To be quite frank, women may not use the ballot at first to good advantage. She will not use it worse than her brother man. When women are given the ballot the two will work together in the political field, each will correct the failings of the other. The political world then find woman quite as necessary as the family does now.

The exercise of the right of suffrage to women will supply an element long needed to ensure the lasting success of a republican form of government.

There is no doubt that the silver question will be the leading issue in the next national campaign. It is a subject of which both the great political parties are afraid, and one indeed, on which the people in both parties are greatly divided, but the country at large demands that it shall be considered.

We are confronted by facts, not theories. There is too little gold in the world to make it a satisfactory currency. A fact, too, that none will deny is that there is a direct connection between business prosperity and the amount of primary money.

History shows that prior to 1873 for nearly two hundred years, there was little fluctuation in the relative value of silver and gold from the ratio of 16 to 1, even though England had demonetized silver early in the century. But when in 1873 the United States dropped silver, followed so soon by the refusal of nearly all the European nations to maintain its coinage, the effect was inevitable. That gold should have rapidly increased in value was a natural consequence, since it has had double duty to perform. The law of supply and demand holding good here as well as with other commodities. But while this is true, the price of all other articles of commerce has decreased.

Here, too, the most serious question of debt confronts us. The payment of a debt must be met in the number of dollars promised, and if those dollars have increased in value the result is evident.

The laborer and all producers of raw material are the first and most direct sufferers, in that manufactured articles are subject to so many other influences than their primary cost of material, but all must be affected in a greater or less degree. The philosophic historian, Hume truly says: "Falling prices

and misery are inseparable companions.

We are face to face with the question, what is to be our money? Will it be possible for the United States alone to restore silver? If the United States and her people were free from debt it would not prove a difficult task. Our natural resources are great, indeed immeasurable, but we must have the capital of older countries to develop these resources. Our great enterprises are in large measure upheld by foreign capital and, as in the management of any commercial enterprise, we cannot hope to win favor unless our business methods meet with the approval of those with whom we have dealings.

But is it not probable that Germany and France, and some other European nations, would follow our lead in restoring silver, as they did in demonetizing it in 1873-4?

This dependence of our commercial life on foreign approval is but one of the difficulties in the way of the restoration of silver, some real, some imaginary. We are told by the monometallists that Europeans would buy silver at seventy cents an ounce and exchange it for our wheat and cotton at much lower figures than they now obtain them. But we find that during the war and the ten years following its close Europeans paid adequate prices for our products, though we had only a depreciated paper currency. And even if an international agreement cannot be reached, after the restoration of silver by the most resourceful country of the world, seventy cents will not buy an ounce of silver in any of the European markets. Anyone that asserts that coin metals have not a law value as well as an intrinsic has certainly read and thought very little. Aristotle said: "Money is a creation of law, not of nature."

The ultimate triumph of silver is inevitable. The country needs, and will have the unrestrained coinage of both gold and silver. This cannot be accomplished at once. The people must first be educated to see its necessity.

Among the many reforms inaugurated by the women of this country is the work of the village improvement society. In the March number of the Forum the subject is ably treated by B. G. Northrup, president of the village improvement associations of the U. S. Forty years ago the first incorporated village improvement society, the Laurel Hill Association, of Stockbridge, Mass., was formed. The idea originated with Mrs. J. Z. Goodrich, who, after repeated efforts, aroused enough interest to call a town meeting and the society was organized. The Stockbridge of the present time is noted for its beauty, while then it was a most forlorn place.

Very few trees or sidewalks were seen, and the cemetery was a desolate spot covered with weeds and surrounded by a broken down fence. At the first annual meeting, the amount paid in cash and labor was \$1.396. At this meeting prizes were offered to the planter of the best fifteen trees, to the one who planted the most and best trees by any of the public roads leading out of town, to the one building the longest and best sidewalk, to the one making the best improvement in the grounds around his dwelling, etc.

About four thousand trees have been planted and the society possesses the income from \$4,000 of interest funds together with individual subscriptions. This society, by offering to bear one-half the expenses, persuaded the railroad company to add an acre and a half to their grounds around the station and erect a fine building. The improvements made by the association led some of the wealthy residents to donate a fine library and lecture hall and similar benefactions to the town. The value of all land and other property in Stockbridge has risen as a result of the work of their society.

Of course this is only one of the many examples mentioned in the Forum article. I wish that the paper could have been printed in full for one can scarcely read it without becoming enthusiastic when one sees the varied and great benefits which have sprung from these organizations. The work has spread very rapidly since the first organization, and the middle and western states take the lead in enthusiastic work. J. Sterling Morton has done more for his own town and Nebraska in general than any other person. Owing to the influence of Arbor Day it is claimed that Nebraska annually plants more trees than any other state in the union. The majority of these societies are composed of women, some of both men and women, while others only admit men as honorary members.

In some places the school children form auxiliary societies for the protection of flowers and shrubs, and keeping the streets clean by picking up scraps of paper, etc., and putting

them into boxes which are nicely painted and placed in various parts of the town. These associations should be kept free from political influence, as should all municipal affairs. In some places one of the best results of the organization has been the disappearance of religious and political animosities, for it is a common cause in which people of all religions and all political beliefs can unite.

Miss Jane Adams in a recent address in Chicago, on "The Place of Modern Woman in Philanthropy," speaking of the difference between the old and the modern methods of dealing with municipal affairs, alluded to the saying that once philanthropists were so busy at the bottom of the precipice with their ambulances, lint and bandages picking up the people who had fallen over the edge, that it did not occur to them to build a fence along the top of the precipice and thus prevent further falls.

The aims of a new society should be few and when those things have been accomplished add other improvements. If all classes are interested, there is scarcely anything which one of these societies cannot do. Municipal reform, sanitary improvements, the improvement of roads, sidewalks, parks and school yards, furnishing drinking tanks and fountains, founding free libraries, and removing nuisances are among the benefits which these societies desire to obtain. The necessary money could be raised by membership fees, by life-memberships, annual subscriptions, lectures, fairs, concerts and other entertainments. Why cannot the women of North Platte make a study of this subject? With a wide-awake association, North Platte could soon have the reputation of being the prettiest and most progressive town of its size in the state. The organization of a competent and energetic society of this kind would do more than any other method to advertise this place and attract home-seekers.

Equal Suffrage.

Upon returning to Colorado two years since, after seven years' residence in Lincoln county, I think I was most impressed with the idea that one can never again "begin where he left off." One finds with the Rev. Jasper, that "the world do move," and the returning wanderer must readjust his views, find new standards, and "begin on" to the new conditions as best he can, if he proposes once more to place himself in touch with his fellows.

The political sensation in Colorado at that time was the campaign for equal suffrage, but it was so unlike the campaign of twenty years ago for the same object, as is possible to imagine. The objective point was the same, but it was reached by a very different road. Then the opposing argument was simply that women did not know enough to vote, to which was frequently added St. Paul's injunction to "let your women keep silent," etc. Evidently the majority of our men and brethren held this opinion as the measure was hopelessly lost.

This article is not reminiscent, but I distinctly remember hearing Susan B. Anthony speak at that time, and the gist of an able argument was proof of woman's mental equality and denunciation of the law which classed her with infants and idiots.

During the campaign of two years ago no argument of that nature was mentioned in my hearing. The wonderful advancement of the sex in literature, art and mechanical pursuits, by which it has become so close a second to man as to sometimes appear first, is the distinctive feature of the age—but that to quote Kipling, is "another story," and requires a newspaper of its own. Suffice it to say he who would make use of that line of special pleading at the present time would find himself laughed out of court.

There was very little genuine opposition in Colorado to extending the right of suffrage to woman. Wyoming's experience placed the question beyond the pale of experiment, and the general sentiment seemed to be that if the women insisted on voting "why let 'em try it." "If she will, she will, you may depend on't." In short the popular mind had become educated up to the equal suffrage idea.

Four principal arguments were used by suffragists in canvassing for votes:

First—The intelligence of women usually put in interrogative style. "Should not our refined, well informed and highly educated woman have the same right to a ballot as the ignorant man foreigner who has just landed on our shore?"

Second—"Taxation without representation is tyranny." "Should not the woman of property, have at least an equal right with indigent man, in deciding matters requiring the raising of revenue?"

Third—Have not all women an

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equal interest with men in deciding vital points of government, as open saloons, versus club rooms, prohibition, etc.

Fourth—Solely affirmed—All women would vote for good men only for office, thus purifying politics and instituting reforms.

To the first proposition was responded, that if all women were well educated or even well-informed, there could be but one answer to the question, and that a most emphatic "Yes." But among the ignorant foreigners whose right to vote is challenged, there are probably as many women as men, and these female foreigners acquire the right of suffrage with the males. No one can go so far as to claim that the ignorant of sex makes an individual either educated or refined, and whereas the man foreigner goes abroad among his fellows, acquires our language, and some information as to his political duties, the women of his family remain at home, speaking their native tongue, and not until the second generation grows up, do they become Americanized. We cannot double our intelligent vote by equal suffrage without at the same time more than doubling our ignorant vote which sounds like an Irish bull.

Proposition second carried to its logical conclusion, makes the property the responsible voter. Many years ago the law of an eastern state required each voter to pay taxes on at least twenty dollars worth of property. One young man especially desirous of voting, but lacking the necessary dollars, persuaded a generous uncle to make him a present of a donkey of that value, when he at once became a duly qualified elector Q. E. D. The donkey and not the man voted. The writer holds, however, that the terms donkey and man were synonymous, in this connection, as any man above being classed with the long-eared creature would have rustled for his dollars instead of begging them. Logically speaking the alien, the minor, the mentally incapable, and boarders in the penitentiary, are tyrannized over on this proposition when they are deprived of the ballot.

Third—All women have an equal interest with men in deciding questions of political economy, but experience does not prove that the large accession to our voting population makes any difference in results. Last year our neighboring town, Evans, "went dry" at the spring election and a great flourish or trumpets announced the hand of the women voter. This year, after twelve months' experience with closed saloons and open club houses, the town "went wet" once more, but I have as yet heard no claim that the women "did it with their little hatchet" this time. I presume—with no especial knowledge in the premises—there seemed a choice between two evils, and the voters chose what seemed the least, as they had done before, when men only wielded the fateful ballot.

The last claim that women will vote good men only into office, purifying politics, and hastening the millennium, is the most attractive bait presented that large class of visionary reformers, who would like to dwell in a modern Utopia. In the first place the adjective good,

in this connection, means what it stands for in the mind of the speaker. Many excellent women think that man only truly good, who is a church member, or at least a regular church goer. Another large class do not insist upon this requirement, but exact freedom from all large and most small vices, while still others condone many sins if the man and brother is only good in his domestic relations, and a public spirited citizen.

Dearly beloved; don't for an instant imagine that political influence is going to do for woman, what she cannot do for herself. "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world." I do not believe the accident of sex raises more than half of humanity, above the influence of heredity and environment. I utterly refuse to believe the average man any worse than the woman with whom he comes in contact.

The mother who bears and rears sons, the sisters who grow to maturity with brothers, sharing alike their father's influence, and the maiden who enters her life work with the husband of her own selection, have no incentive to strive for higher levels than those trodden by the men who rule their affections. "Resolutions never go backward." Nebraska will sooner or later join the procession, and its residents will find themselves in the throes of a suffrage campaign. I will here say to those who advocate the measure, that I have found that one absolutely unanswerable affirmative argument. A prominent business man of Greeley said to me that he advocated and had always advocated "equal suffrage." Why? Because its right. No men, or set of men have any just right to arrogate to themselves privileges which they deny to others simply because they can.

Might never makes right "and still with the heel of assertion he trampled my argument down" if I had any, which I didn't.

In conclusion I wish to add my conviction, that the right to vote is of no advantage to the average woman. It may become a duty as it now is in Colorado, and then every woman should vote as early and often as any man.

There are two vital reasons why woman, for her own sake, should pause before demanding the ballot. The first is as old as Eve and is simply that a radical difference of views on either politics or religion imperils domestic happiness. Every wife has an undoubted right to her own political belief, but not all have the judgment to realize that sometimes "silence is golden."

Not many men can walk up smilingly to the ballot box and see his wife nullify his vote when that vote is the outward sign of his most cherished belief.

If there is anything, better, sweeter and more desirable than happy and peaceful domestic relations, I have not yet found it in forty years experience. The second objection is that a difference in political views very frequently destroys friendly relations, outside the family circle.

Mrs. J. Ellen Foster, the famous lecturer, warned us of this, in a social address to women delivered at the Oasis Hotel in Greeley last fall. She said women were too in-

tense, in all they undertook; they would carry their politics into their parlors, and discuss men and measures, when they should be confining themselves to tea and toast. They would take such a striking interest in their political faiths that they would presently find themselves cultivating unbelief in their friendships, and

"The goblins will get you if you don't watch out."

There seems a quality in human nature which makes the infant cry for the moon, and the adult strive after things equally unattainable; this quality will so dominate the women of Nebraska, that they will use their best endeavors to reach equal suffrage even though it turn to "ropes of sand" in their grasp.

I will only add one word to both sides of the suffrage story as I have told it. It is my ideal of what should constitute the qualifications of any elector.

Equal suffrage to all men and women alike, who are twenty-one years of age, or have lived twenty-one years in America; who are able to read the Constitution of the United States in English, and write legibly in the same language.

Then and then only will I cease to consider the desirability of equal suffrage, but welcome the duties and responsibilities of a citizenship which places men and women alike on the broad platform of freedom and equality before the law.

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